

HIGHLIGHTS - COOK COUNTY CORRECTIONS BOARD MEETING
FRIDAY, May 12, 2006, HELD AT THE COOK COUNTY CORRECTIONS
FACILITY " DIV.5

Re: Cook County Board of Corrections meeting
May 12, 2006 Division 5 Conference Room

Present: Iola McGowan, Vice-Chair Munir Muhammad, Board Members Esequiel Iracheta, Gilbert Marchman and Howard Brookins Sr., Department Legal Advisor Joseph Consolo, Board Secretary Shirley Moore, League of Women Voters Observer Michelle Jordan

- I. The meeting was called to order at 12:35.
- II. The Minutes from April 14 were approved.

III. **Directors report:** Director Kurtovich distributed the Executive Directors Log which detailed the number of persons being held in each division of the DOC. Kurtovich then gave the incident report. Since the last meeting of the Board of Corrections, one inmate has died. The inmate's name is Jeffrey Iniguez. Iniguez was stabbed in the neck and died a week later from his injuries. He was being held in division 11. No information was given about the person or persons who stabbed Mr. Iniguez. The only information given was Mr. Iniguez's history with law enforcement. The director hypothesized that the perpetrator would claim that the act was done in self defense. It was implied that the fatal incident involved two inmates and did not involve DOC staff.

IV. I. McGowan asked the director to confirm rumors that Director Kurtovich had recently hired several "special inspectors". Kurtovich stated that he had not. Internal Affairs had hired recently. The people named to the positions in question were not new hires but transfers. However, Internal Affairs ("IA") has hired new people in accordance with the Consent Decree. These new employees do not work for the Director they work for the Inspector General. Most of those hired are police officers or former police officers.

Several members of the board stated that morale is very low amongst the employees of the DOC. Many noted the link to the appearance of favoritism in advancement procedures by the Department. One member asked if an exam is required to be hired by IA. Kurtovich stated there was not. He noted that IA employees serve at the will of the sheriff and are unionized. One member stated that "Morale is very low among the grunts, maybe that is why there are so many escapes." Kurtovich stated that the board should review the Merit Board Rules and Regulations if they have further questions about advancement. A copy will be provided prior to the next meeting.

I. McGowan inquired whether Kurtovich had created a new fugitive unit. He stated that no unit has been created.

An inquiry was made about the information about inmate aging. There was confusion about the information requested. The director provided information about the ages of the inmate population. One board member noted that the information sought was not the age of the inmates but the length of time an inmate had been in the DOC. A length of stay report will be provided at the next meeting.

One inquiry was made about inmates under 16. The director noted that occasionally they will incarcerate a person under 17 which is the minimum age to be held in the DOC. It happens approximately 5 times a year. In most cases the mother of the child will call and inform the DOC that the inmate is under age. The child is immediately moved to a solitary cell and then custody is then transferred to the appropriate juvenile correction authorities. All juvenile offenders are transferred on their 17th birthday out of juvenile facilities and given to DOC, or by order of court.

A motion to accept the Director's report was made and seconded.

V. New Business:

G. Marchman noted that obtaining a quorum should not be a problem because everyone should know that Munir Muhammad has his proxy.

VI. Old Business:

Under-sheriff Whittler reported that the Ministerial Alliance has hired a new person and she will provide the name of this new hire at the next meeting. She noted that she is looking to hire another person in June. The Religious community wanted these positions to be created to bridge the gap between the faith based community and the DOC.

Ms. Whittler noted that the request for a stipend must be part of the budgeting process. She will receive the Budget the first week of July and it will be voted on in November. She will make a report at a later date about this request.

In accordance with a request made at a previous meeting the undersheriff handed out an organizational chart of departments.

I. McGowan inquired about whether the DOC conducts sensitivity training. The undersheriff noted that there is recruit training and continuous in service training. A new recruit gets 12 weeks of training and 40 hours annual ongoing in service training. The DOC is creating a video to be used to show at all roll calls for officers in order to cement the sensitivity training.

One inquiry was made about the arrested guard from the recent break out. One member wanted to know what sort of assistance that employee will have. The under-sheriff stated that the DOCs Employee Assistance would be the only resource. Under sheriff Whittler noted that she will bring the Director of Training to the Board so that the board can more fully the depth of the training program.

Under-sheriff Whittler discussed the Capital Improvements projects. Presently they are improving the wiring. She noted that some items require a bond issues and some are facilities management issues, She doesn't handle the facilities management these matters are beyond her scope. She noted that the ion security machines were provided through the asset forfeiture program.

Meeting adjourned at 1:39

Observed and reported by Michelle Jordan.